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Black and Gooey Products. He is the first staff man to be in the position to draw on extensive resources within his own command level (legal, engineering, environmental, marketing) for the purpose of analyzing, in depth, the straws in the wind that have the chance to be a hero, however, if the chain, from Foreman Jones on, had not functioned; and had he behaved like General Rabbitt, he might have cost his company huge sums of money.

At Consolidated Sludge, the management realized that there was, already in place in the field, a more than adequate intelligence gathering system, just waiting for encouragement. By providing that encouragement (by acting on information gained, unlike General Rabbitt in our military example, and by requiring, as part of its executive performance evaluation system, proof of sensitivity to intelligence down to plant level) Consolidated managed to first cut its losses (by avoiding the law suit), then to turn the situation to its advantage by improving its image as well as its profitability.

Management should not have to read about threats to its organization in the newspaper. By that time, the enemy is in the field and on the march, and the corporation is forced into a series of long-term, complicated and expensive holding actions, which might not succeed in the end. Stockholders like profits, not lawsuits. There are many former CEOs on the street today because they did not gauge accurately what was happening in the real world, and thus were unaware of the new enemies, in strange and unsuspected alliances, who were besieging their castles.

**PRQ Comment.** . . Every fable has a moral, but this one is too obvious to need elaboration. Instead,

we present a real-life example of another Brigadier General Rabbitt: a three billion dollar company was directly asked, within the last month, to present its case for and proof of its technical ability to achieve a total environmental improvement program—with billions involved—to a leading senatorial candidate who wanted the information as a major non-partisan issue for his campaign.

The request came from the candidate's chief idea man, who intended to bring his candidate and the company's CEO and senior public policy officer together for an extensive briefing.

#### *Advantages:*

1. An opportunity to shape legislation and to achieve public understanding on an issue vital to the company's profit and loss figures.
2. A personal relationship between a CEO and a vital public figure.

#### *Disadvantages:*

PRQ can think of none.

#### *Results:*

The candidate's idea man was ignored. The opportunities were lost. Another company seized the competitive advantage. The apathetic officer who could have acted earned "the undying contempt of all those who performed correctly."

#### **PRQ Summary. . .**

Back to "toilet paper procurement" for this General Rabbitt. He will still collect his pension. □

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